CAUGHT IN THE CHINESE REVOLUTION.

BY

Ernest F. Borst-Smith 司慕德

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CAUGHT IN THE CHINESE REVOLUTION

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A RECORD OF RISKS AND RESCUE

BY

ERNEST F. BORST-SMITH

ILLUSTRATED

T. FISHER UNWIN
LONDON: ADELPHI TERRACE
LEIPSIC: INSELSTRASSE 20
1912

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TO

A. DE C. SOWERBY,

J. C. KEYTE, E. T. NYSTRÖM,

E. R. LONG, W. M. PALMER, H. J. FAIRBURN,

P. D. EVANS, J. H. DENVER JONES,

AND

F. W. WARRINGTON,

WHO NOBLY RISKED THEIR LIVES TO RESCUE THE

SHENSI MISSIONARIES,

THIS VOLUME IS DEDICATED

WITH

ADMIRATION AND AFFECTION

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PREFACE

THE experiences here described all occurred in the province of Shensi, or on the direct road from Shensi, and therefore must not be taken as necessarily typical of China generally.

Nothing can be predicated of China as a whole; it is only possible for me to speak of the small section I know. During the Revolution every province, and indeed every town, was affected differently.

But if some statements are not *typical*, they are all *true*, and I have had the fullest opportunity of verifying all I have written. I was not in or near Sianfu when the rising there occurred, but I have in my possession long descriptive letters from my colleagues there, and I spent a week in January in constant daily contact with many who were on the actual scene. Moreover I have had access to the minute and detailed diaries of Dr Cecil Robertson and the Rev. E. J. Ellison, B.Sc. (both of the Baptist Missionary

Society), written on the spot. And although these came into my hands after the chapters on those events were written, they serve as additional evidence of the truth of all herein affirmed.

Some explanation of the liberal space given to *North* Shensi should perhaps be given. One reason is the *first-hand character* of the knowledge. Here all is PERSONAL EXPERIENCE and this to some extent compensates for what the author most sincerely regrets, but could not avoid—viz., the constant intrusion of the first personal pronoun. But there is another reason. The dangers in Sianfu, the provincial capital, though more intensely acute for the time than elsewhere, did not last nearly so long. Comparative peace and quiet were restored (imperfectly, of course) fairly soon. But in North Shensi (as in all outlying areas) the panic continued almost unabated for the two long months (like two long lifetimes) that we were there.

And so it is the longer period of great danger that is reflected in the greater space devoted to North Shensi.

I am deeply conscious of the many imperfections of this work, but find comfort in the fact that the interest of these pages lies in its story rather than its style; in the tale itself rather than in the telling.

The hope is entertained that some other member, or members, either of the Shensi Relief Expedition or the Shensi Missionary Staff, will yet undertake the task of giving to the public an account of what happened in Shensi that shall be worthy of the subject.

My own one desire, with which I began, continued, and ended this small volume, is that the heroism of the nine men who formed the Shensi Relief Expedition should be widely known — and copied. If what is written serves that purpose, I am amply rewarded.

My best thanks are due to my brother, Mr H. B. Smith, for reading the manuscript, and for many valuable suggestions; to the *Daily Mirror* for the portraits of leading Chinese statesmen; and to the Baptist Missionary Society for most of the illustrations used in this volume.

SOUTHFIELDS,
LONDON, S.W.
March, 1912.

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CHAPTER I

THE RISING IN SIANFU, THE CAPITAL OF SHENSI—THE MASSACRE OF THE MANCHUS

Not once, nor twice, in the long, strange history of the Middle Kingdom has the ancient city of Sianfu[1] played a conspicuous part. And now, once again, in the Revolution of 1911-12, which has focussed the attention of the whole world, East and West, it takes a unique place.

Sianfu is the capital of the old and isolated province of Shensi, which is situated in the north-west part of the Chinese Empire. The area of this province alone is greater than that of England and Scotland combined, while its population is nearly nine millions. So isolated is it that people at the coast speak of it as of a foreign country. Measured by the time it takes—and this, it must be admitted, is the fairest method—London is nearer to

[1] Sianfu has several times been capital of the whole Chinese Empire.

Pekin than is Sianfu ; for while London is only thirteen days distant from Pekin, it takes on an average sixteen days (weather permitting!) to reach the capital of Shensi, to say nothing of its remoter parts.

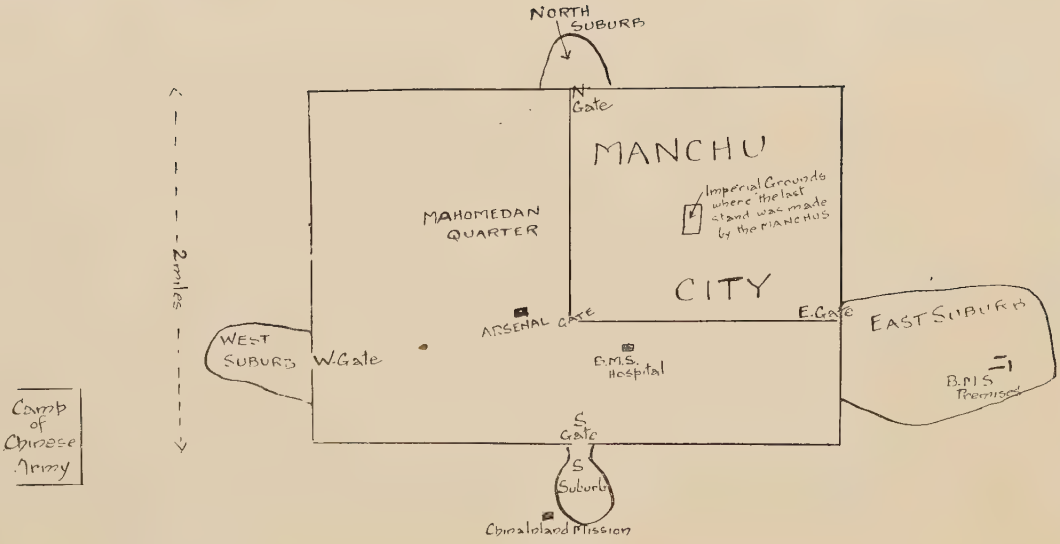
As soon as rumours reached Shensi of the Revolutionary Rising in Hankow and Wuchang early in October, considerable unrest was felt, but it was not supposed by any outside the circle of those who led the movement that a local rising would take place.

It is a far cry from Hankow to Sianfu (a full fortnight's journey),[1] and the fiercest tumult in the former would not necessarily be incompatible with perfect calm in the latter.

It came, therefore, as "a bolt from the blue" when about midday on Sunday, 22nd October, the roar of cannon was heard and the flames of the burning Manchu city were seen.

It seems that the rising was *sprung* even on those who headed it. Circumstances precipitated it. The fact that new and more modern weapons were to be supplied to the Manchu soldiers leaked out, and so the Revolutionary leaders in Sianfu decided that

[1] Eight hundred miles—half of which can be done by rail in two days, the other half, by *road*, taking fully twelve days.



Sketch plan of CITY of **SIANFU**

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they must strike while they had the chance of doing so with success. Moreover, on that day a partial eclipse of the sun took place, and according to immemorial custom, all officials —civil and military, great and small, Manchu and Chinese—were expected to go to their respective temples to worship. They were thus away from the shelter of their residences, which were, accordingly, less strongly guarded. Man and mansion, being separated, were both more easily attacked.

The movement was led by the pupils of the large Military Academy, and its method was as follows: Some of the soldiers were told off to overcome the guard and shut the heavy gates of the city; the main body bombarded and secured the arsenal; the General (all Generals were Manchus) was slaughtered on the very steps of the Temple; and the attack on the inner city, which was occupied exclusively by the Manchus (the Tartars of "Robinson Crusoe"), was begun, the troops quartered outside the west suburb immediately joining the Revolutionary forces, in accordance with what was, doubtless, a pre-arranged plot.

For many hours the Manchu troops offered effective resistance, but the odds against them were too great, for both their weapons and their methods were utterly obsolete.

Then followed what must fill every civilised person with pain and disgust—viz., the virtual extermination of the Manchus. The fact that they lived in a city of their own afforded the opportunity, for escape was thus rendered impossible. Their city was set on fire, and multitudes of people were burned alive. For three whole days a deadly slaughter went on, men, women, and children being slain without mercy or discrimination. Even after that only women and girls were spared. No justification is here attempted of this ruthless massacre, nor can any be found. If the story of this slaughter goes down to history as one of its just retributions, that fact cannot excuse so much barbarity, still less the destruction of the lives of helpless women and children. Yet it cannot be forgotten that the Manchu rule of the past three centuries has been little else than a story of oppression. The entire Manchu population has been like a millstone about the neck of the Chinese nation. For they have been supported—and liberally supported—by the Government, and only military service from the men exacted in return. Living lives of comparative idleness, they have become thoroughly degenerate, the large majority being opium smokers.

It is impossible to give the exact number of

MANCHU CHRISTIAN AND FAMILY, WHO HAD MIRACULOUS ESCAPES.

A MANCHU LADY AND HER DAUGHTER, SHOWING DISTINCTIVE MANCHU HEAD-DRESS, LONG GOWN, AND NATURAL FEET.

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those killed, since it is impossible to know just how many did contrive to escape. The lowest possible estimate of the slain is 10,000, although a Pekin correspondent of the *Times* puts the figure as high as 20,000. Of this great number I have since heard it stated that many committed suicide by such methods as taking overdoses of opium, casting themselves into wells, and hanging, choosing this in preference to death at the hands of their enemies. Another thing which helped the assailants was the fact that many Manchus had supplies of gunpowder concealed in their houses, so that when the Manchu quarters were fired these exploded, causing innumerable deaths.

Since so many perished, it is altogether remarkable to be able to relate that not one Christian or associate was harmed. The same gates and walls that made the escape of thousands of others impossible, kept them from danger. For hostilities began during the time of Sunday morning service, so that all those who had gone to the Christian church in the east suburb were away from the scene of bloodshed.

Among these, one in particular had an adventurous time. He contrived for a day or two to hide in the outhouses of the missionaries. Several times after they thought he had made good his escape, in harmony with

their urgent advice, they found him again hesitating and hiding, but after two or three days he left the city, first making for Fu Yin T'sun, a village forty miles to the north, where a large number of Christians lived. Feeling this to be still within the danger zone, he pursued his journey northwards, arriving ten days later at my house in Yenanfu, where I sheltered him for two months, employing him in my home. During this time his plight was pitiful indeed. His eye had a wild, haggard, well-nigh insane stare; his strength was all but exhausted, so that even light work was a strain. Sadness, too, was added to weakness, for he was under the impression that every member of his family had been massacred. While he was with us his strength gradually returned, and there was, moreover, unexpected happiness in store for him, for when at last communications were partially restored, the news came that his wife and children had had miraculous escapes. By the time that I took the journey to Sianfu (two months after the massacre) a general amnesty had been declared, rendering it safe for him to return. He walked every step of the 300 miles that separated him from his family.

It is said that the fall of Sianfu into the hands of the Revolutionaries created a deeper impression on the authorities in Pekin than

ENTRANCE TO YAMEN (*i.e.*, LAW COURTS) OF GOVERNOR OF SHENSI.

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any other event till then; for Sianfu was regarded as a veritable stronghold of Imperialism. No better evidence of this can be found than the fact that during the last great upheaval in China (the Boxer movement of 1900) the Empress Dowager, the Emperor Kwang Hsü, and the entire Court found temporary shelter there. But times have changed!

CHAPTER II

HOW FOREIGN RESIDENTS IN SIANFU FARED

When authentic information about the Revolutionary Rising in Hankow and Wuchang reached Shensi, foreigners had little or no uneasiness about their own personal safety. The strongest measures of protection had been adopted at Hankow with success, and it was believed would be enforced elsewhere should trouble arise. The question was purely a domestic one, and most assuredly had no anti-foreign purpose. And let it here be stated with the utmost clearness *that no foreigner in Shensi either met with or feared danger at the hands of any real Revolutionary leader.* But there are sins of omission as well as commission, and it is impossible to escape the conclusion that *sufficient protective measures were not taken!*

Inside the city Mr H. A. Henne, the head official of the Imperial Post Office for the provinces of Shensi and Kansu, went during the first day of the rising to the hospital of

the Baptist Missionary Society to enquire about the health of Dr Charter's sick child. On his way home he was attacked in the streets and severely wounded in the head. He was, however, rescued by Revolutionary soldiers, and escorted to his house. But it was only owing to the prompt attention of Dr Charter that his life was saved. The rendering of this help was fraught with the greatest risk to the doctor's life. The streets were crowded with an angry and promiscuous mob, many of those associating themselves with the movement not understanding its purpose and programme. But on being sent for, Dr Charter immediately started out into the boisterous streets with two soldiers, one on each side, pushing their way through the mob, and shouting at the top of their voices: "Protect the foreigner! Protect the foreigner!"

Meanwhile, within the hospital deep anxiety and sorrow overcame fear, for little Dorothy Charter (aged fifteen months) lay dangerously ill, and it was to her that Mrs Charter and Nurse Watt (both of the hospital staff) gave their whole thought. But their lives too were in grave danger. Not only were they surrounded by an irresponsible mob, but there also seemed the fear that the Mohammedans might rise and be a further menace. Yet the night passed without molestation.

In the morning Dr Charter returned, and at midnight on Tuesday little Dorothy passed peacefully away from the scene of tempest.

As connection between the city and the outside world was cut off on account of the shutting of the city gates, there was all the greater responsibility resting on the leaders of the Revolution to make some provision to protect foreign life and property *outside* the city. Failing this, sufficient warning ought to have been given to permit of foreigners obtaining safe shelter within the city. The neglect to do so was followed by the gravest results.

Outside the walls of the south suburb was situated a small school for the children of the Swedish missionaries, with a Mr and Mrs Beckman in residence and a Mr Watne as tutor.

At midnight on the 22nd October an angry mob attacked these premises and set them on fire. The occupants attempted first to hide, then to escape, but Mrs Beckman and five children were killed before they had time to get away. Mr Watne and Mr Beckman's daughter, a girl of twelve years of age, made good their escape, but some hours afterwards were caught in a village six miles distant and stoned to death. Of those resident there, only Mr Beckman, carrying an infant, got away,

EAST GATES, SIANFU.

These gates were closed from October 22nd–25th, rendering communication between city and suburb impossible.

ON THE TOP OF THE CITY WALL, SIANFU, FROM WHICH INSTRUCTIONS TO PROTECT FOREIGNERS WERE PROCLAIMED.

and eventually found refuge in the western suburb, where other Swedish missionaries had their homes. The children thus cruelly massacred were—Ruth and Selma Beckman, Oscar and Hilda Bergström, George Ahlstrand, and Hilda Nielson. And every time we think of those young lives, so ruthlessly sacrificed, it is impossible to prevent our sorrow from being mingled with deep indignation against those who did the ghastly deed, and blame for those whose neglect rendered it posssible. The authorities claim in palliation of their neglect that not only was the day, but also the *hour*, of the rising precipitated. They had intended to commence hostilities at 8 P.M. and to forewarn or guard all foreigner life and property. But their plans leaked out, and the arrest of their leaders was feared, so they started at noon instead of evening.

Though excitement was inevitably extreme as soon as any idea of what was proceeding inside the city was known, it seemed for the first day to the Baptist Mission staff in the east suburb that their lives were not in danger, and that they would be well advised to stay at home. But early on the second day, Monday, news of what had happened during the night outside the south suburb reached them, and this changed their whole outlook.

Precedent is a powerful thing in China, and the black deed of Sunday night was not only terrible in itself, but was likely to be the precursor of a series of similar atrocities. The missionaries in the east suburb, therefore, after consultation with their most trusted Chinese helpers, decided that it would be wise to make their way to neighbouring villages. They took with them some silver and a few other necessary things, and started in three companies. One company included the Misses Beckingsale, Thomas, and Turner, and Dr Robertson; another Messrs Ellison and Stanley—both parties starting in a south-easterly direction. They had not gone far, however, when they were pursued, robbed, and driven back. While returning they heard people speaking freely about their certain death. On reaching one of the Mission Houses, they were all locked in one room and guarded. Then followed two hours of awful suspense, during which they expected every moment to be their last.

While they were thus imprisoned their captors went to the city wall—the gate was still closed—for instructions; and in due time it was thence proclaimed: "Protect the foreigners." And the word went all over the suburb: "Protect, not kill." And so they were released; and the goods stolen from

A RECENT GROUP OF SHENSI BAPTIST MISSIONARIES, MOST OF WHOM HAD VERY NARROW ESCAPES.

REV. DONALD SMITH, M.A.

MRS. DONALD SMITH.

Savagely attacked and severely wounded by band of ruffians, on October 23, 1911.

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them were soon returned, the thieves, as so often happens in China, retaining the things intact to see whether or not it was safe to keep them.

But the Rev. and Mrs Donald Smith, on leaving the east suburb went in another direction from the others—viz., due *east*. It was their intention to escort home those of the scholars who lived north of the River Wei, and then to stay for a time in Fu Yin T'sun (Gospel Village), so named because its population consists entirely of nominal Christians. They had not gone, however, more than three miles when they were molested by a band of ruffians and badly beaten and bruised. Mr Donald Smith did his best to protect his wife, but in so doing had both his own arms broken. Both husband and wife were left on the roadside insensible.

This gave rise to the rumour, which rapidly spread to the extreme north of the province and was reported in foreign papers, that both Mr and Mrs Donald Smith had been killed. The head Chinese teacher of the Baptist Missionary Society High School was sure that he had seen their dead bodies by the roadside. Fortunately this was not so. Some kind country people cared for them, and conducted them back to their home in the east suburb, arriving there just after the other missionaries had been released. The Chinese schoolgirls whom they

were escorting were not killed, as was reported in the European papers ; they were scattered unharmed, and later came back in small companies.

When the city gates were again opened, Mr and Mrs Smith were conveyed to the Baptist Missionary Society Hospital, where, thanks to the skill of Dr Robertson and the care of Mrs Charter, they quickly began to recover.

GIRLS' BOARDING SCHOOL, SIANFU, SHENSI.

It was while escorting a number of these scholars to Fu Yin Tsun that Mr. and Mrs. Donald Smith were wounded.

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CHAPTER III

PERSECUTE OR PROTECT?—AN EXPLANATION

To the English reader there must appear to be a perplexing and confusing mixture of both persecution and protection. And, indeed, in this whole movement there was much that seems intricately complex. While, therefore, I wish here to make as clear as possible who did the one and who the other, it should also be understood that *no explanation which does away with every contradiction, can possibly be the true one.*

The statement has been repeatedly made that Revolutionaries protected and robbers persecuted. But all is not quite so simple as that.

Here, for instance, is a letter, written by Mr E. R. Beckman (who, with his infant child, Thyra, it will be remembered, was the sole survivor from the massacre of foreigners outside the south suburb), flatly contradicting it.

A dinner was given at the Palace Hotel,

Shanghai, to a company of refugees from Shensi, at which that clear distinction was again made.

On the next day (*i.e.*, 20th January 1912), Mr Beckman wrote the following to the *North China Daily News*:—

"As I did not see my way clear to be present at the entertainment, yet having lost so much through the outrages he (Mr Wen Tsung-Yao) has spoken of, I wish to make known to the public who they were which are called robbers and bandits. Two days previous to the outbreak of the Revolution at Sianfu, the constable of the police at the south suburb had ordered the village people in that vicinity, on penalty of death, that each family should send a man for the purpose of exterminating the foreigners and of burning their houses. The object was not only to exterminate us who were at the school for missionaries' children, which was located outside the south suburb, but to rid the *east* and *west* suburbs from foreigners as well; and they had fixed the time for each place to be destroyed. That this police constable was in close sympathy with the Revolutionaries is evident, or he could not have known before hand when the Revolution should begin.

"It may be well, also, to mention here that about eighty or ninety per cent. of the Revolutionaries in Sianfu were members of the Kolaohwei (*i.e.*, Elder Brother Society)

DR. WU TING FANG, MINISTER OF EDUCATION.

DR. SUN YAT SEN, FOUNDER OF THE CHINESE REPUBLIC.

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and that the general who ordered the execution of this constable was later attacked by an assassin, also that two others who had taken special part in the attack upon us were rewarded with the rank of officer in the Revolutionary army. It would have been an easy matter to protect all the foreigners if two or three soldiers had been stationed at each place where they were. Even after the burning of the school, no soldiers were appointed to protect us who now were in the west suburb.

"Had it not been for the kindness of the teachers of a military school, who were all from other provinces, we all should have shared the same fate with those who had been murdered. I do not wish to blame the leaders of the Revolution unnecessarily, but at the same time I cannot keep silence when the truth is hidden away under the statement that it was robbers who committed these crimes."

Obviously some explanation is necessary. There were two parties within the Revolutionary movement. The one was composed largely of scholars—military and civil. These make up what is known as "Young China." Many of them have studied abroad. They may be inexperienced, and are often far too lighthearted, but they are undoubtedly patriotic. In a word, they are the followers of Dr Sun

Yat Tsen. This section was unanimously in favour of *protecting* foreigners. But in Shensi a famous secret society, the "Kolaohwei," or "Elder Brother Society" (very much like that other notorious secret society, the "Boxers"), is very powerful. It is said to have an ancient history; but of this period, beyond the fact of its existence, little or no authentic information can be obtained. What we do know is that sixty years ago it was largely augmented by the influx of thousands of dismissed soldiers of the Taiping Rebellion, since when its numbers have rapidly increased, until to-day this great octopus, with its many and far-reaching ramifications, is a serious menace to the peace and happiness of the community. This is more particularly true of the army, so that in the great provinces of Hunan, Szechwan, and Shensi, and probably others, it is estimated that at least eighty per cent. are members of this powerful organisation. Thus in many places it is the army itself that, honeycombed with rebellion, constitutes the chief danger.

It is, doubtless, much more reputable in some places than in others, but on the whole it is a lawless and violent robber horde. It draws its members almost entirely from the ignorant and rebellious section of society.

One of its main purposes is said to be—

and here is the one point it has in common with the Revolutionaries proper—the overthrow of the Manchu dynasty.

What share the leaders of this society had in the *original plans* for the rising in Sianfu it is difficult to determine; but it is certain that from *near the beginning* of the movement they formed the vast majority. The members of this society were probably responsible, not only for the murders near the south suburb, but also for the attack on Mr and Mrs Donald Smith, and for the troubles of the missionaries in the east suburb.

In a word, the plans and purposes of the truly patriotic Revolutionaries were largely marred by this overwhelming majority of more or less irresponsible rioters.

The patriotic section was not numerous or powerful enough to insist on the carrying out of its own programme, and it had to resort to heavily bribing the members of the secret society to obtain their support. But so much was the authority of the true Revolutionaries threatened, that many who at the outset led the movement had later to retire from it because their position became utterly false and untenable.

Thus, if the Elder Brother Society is entitled to be numbered amongst the Revolutionaries proper, then Mr Beckman's statement that

Revolutionaries *persecuted* foreigners is true. But if the term "Revolutionary" is confined entirely to the "Young China" section, then it can be said that Revolutionaries *protected* foreigners.

CHAPTER IV

TRAVELLING EXPERIENCES

At the time of the outbreak the Rev. A. G. Shorrock (the senior member of the Baptist Missionary Society's staff in Shensi, who has spent a quarter of a century in China), with his wife and daughter, was paying a visit to the society's station at San Yuan, a city of great commercial importance situated north of the Wei River, where new hospital buildings were in course of erection. While they were there rumours became so wild that it seemed wise to leave that city for Fu Yin T'sun (Gospel village), fifteen miles away. This they did with safety, and even spent a day or two without alarm. But before long the whole country-side became infested with marauding bands; armed robbers were prowling round day and night, and were a continual menace. Threatenings and rumours were very bad, rendering the utmost vigilance imperative. Once the house in which they were living

was on the point of being fired, and this was only prevented by a fairly strong force of villagers, who guarded the premises night and day. The inhabitants of this village, it may again be mentioned, are associated with the Christian community. And it is a matter for surprise, as well as for great gratitude, that in the midst of such tumult their lives were spared.

It was with joy that, on the 12th day, they welcomed Mr Shih (one of our most valuable helpers), with an armed force from the newly-constituted Revolutionary Government to escort them to Sianfu.

A striking instance of special Providence should here be recorded. Just before starting out on their tour Mr and Mrs Shorrock had entertained the idea of leaving their eleven-year-old daughter, Mary, for a few days in the school outside the south suburb, where the six foreign children and two adults were massacred. It was a most natural suggestion, but had it been carried out, Mary's life could not have been spared, and it is a cause for the deepest thankfulness that by accompanying her parents her young life was preserved.

During September 1911 Dr and Mrs Young had been doing medical work at Suitechow, fifteen days' journey north of the capital, Sianfu. On 15th October they reached Yenanfu, where the writer was stationed, on

REV. A. G. SHORROCK, B.A., MRS. SHORROCK, B.A., WITH THEIR DAUGHTER, WHO WERE CUT OFF FROM THE CITY AT THE TIME OF THE OUTBREAK.

DR. ANDREW YOUNG AND MRS. YOUNG, M.A., M.D., WHO HID FOR TEN DAYS IN A CAVE FROM THE MOB.

their homeward journey. After staying a few days, and rendering valuable help at the Conference for Church Members and Associates then being held, they started on Monday, 23rd October, just at the time when the missionaries of the east suburb of Sianfu were attempting to escape — though, of course, they did not know that fact.

After travelling south for two days, they began to meet rumours of what had happened in the capital. Then at Chung Pu, two days farther still, they had to consider the advisability, or otherwise, of pursuing their journey. On asking the advice of the local officials (civil and military), they were advised to venture another day's journey before finally deciding to return to me, and protection was promised them so far.

But with every step southwards the rumours grew wilder and panic increased, so that at the end of the day's journey it became obvious that to attempt to proceed to Sianfu would most certainly prove fatal. Moreover they met a scholar from the Fu Yin T'sun School with a letter for them from Mr Shorrock, telling, amongst other things, it was feared that Mr and Mrs Donald Smith had been killed.

They then decided that their only possible hope of safety was to return northwards with

a view to reaching Yenanfu. The following day they regained Chung Pu without mishap; but the storm was growing wilder and wilder, and another difficulty presented itself — the northern as well as the southern road became dangerous. Thus advance and retreat were alike impossible.

Happily, in the town of Chung Pu and in the surrounding villages there are a number of native Christians. Some of these came to Dr Young at night and advised him to escape into a village, where it would be almost impossible to trace him. And so, leaving horse and luggage, and only taking such things as they could carry for their fifteen-months'-old boy, they escaped from the city, and travelled during two nights over the hills in the fierce cold to a cave owned by one of the Christians. On arrival there, a messenger was secured to take information as to their whereabouts to Sianfu; but a difficulty presented itself, for no writing materials were to be found. Thus was his native ingenuity appealed to, and the letter he wrote telling of his hiding-place and asking for an escort was written with an incense-stick, once more illustrating that "Necessity is the mother of Invention." I am inclined to think that securing the paper was also a problem, for a few days previously

MR. SHIH, A TRUSTED CHINESE HELPER AND ADVISER, WHO ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS LED ESCORTS TO MISSIONARIES IN PERIL.

CHINESE TRAVEL : THE SEDAN CHAIR.

To face p. 41.

Dr Young had written to me using the backs of Chinese visiting cards, but it is more than likely that he had none of these with him at the time of his escape. It is therefore probable that the paper windows, which form an indispensable part of every native house, were requisitioned for the stationery.

After several days an armed force, again accompanied by Mr Shih, was sent to escort him to the capital, where he safely arrived on 13th November.

PART II

NORTH SHENSI

CHAPTER I

PANIC AND PREPARATION

THERE was the greatest possible contrast between the effect of the Revolution on the places in close proximity to the capital of the province, and on those that were more remote.

In both alike was the old authority overthrown, but in the distant places nothing equivalent to an effective new Government was established.

In describing the effect of the movement in North Shensi, it would seem better to speak in detail of one place—that where I was stationed—than to make general remarks about the whole.

It should therefore be understood that what follows in these chapters is only true *in detail* of Yenanfu, the prefecture situated half-way between Sianfu and the Great Wall of China, which forms the northern boundary of Shensi; but it will incidentally illustrate much that

happened in the whole area, and perhaps over the whole empire.

On the Sunday following the rising I received a visit from the head military mandarin of Yenanfu—the authority of this official, who was an intimate friend of mine, extended over the entire prefecture—and he gave me an account of the events of 22nd to 24th October, as described in chapter i. of Part I. A friend of his had contrived by secret and special messengers, travelling day and night, to get the news to him quickly. He asked me to let him know all I could find out, and he also promised to keep me informed. He advised me to make all possible provision of food and fuel, and keep tight hold of what ready money I had. On Tuesday morning, just after daybreak, he came again, confirming his earlier news, and promising us his protection at all costs. A few hours later muleteers who had been taking goods southwards began to return, and for several days the stream of returning mules was incessant. Then the panic began. The wildest reports were scattered, and the general impression was that all peace-loving people had been murdered, and that the murderers were practically at the doors. Rumours were mutually conflicting and as indefinite as possible; but every one feared the worst. The regular correspondence of the

THE YENANFU MILITARY FORCES, SHOWING THE HEAD MILITARY MANDARIN (TALL MAN IN CENTRE) AND LIEUT. TSAI, ON HIS LEFT.

Nearly all these soldiers were members of the "Elder Brother Society."

To face p. 47.

officials ceased, and so the "Yamen" staff added to the general fear.

Then arose the most definite and local fear —viz., that the innumerable members of the "Society of Elder Brethren" (probably more numerous in proportion to the population in Yenanfu than anywhere else in Shensi) would rise and plunder and kill. Soon the word went round that Friday, 3rd November, was fixed for such a rising. The officials searched every house and expelled from the city every one who could not secure a guarantor; and strong preparations were made to quell a rising, should one occur.

During these first days of panic the military official was a veritable tower of strength. His soldiers were well armed with modern repeating rifles, and would have been easily equal to any robber rabble. To us he gave special attention. He appointed two of his best soldiers to guard our gate, instructing them, in the event of the least trouble, to fire a shot as an alarm, and promising to use his full force for our protection. One of the soldiers was an enrolled learner; the other often came to church, and was an old opium patient. In case of great danger, the officer had prepared his own best rooms for our use and better protection.

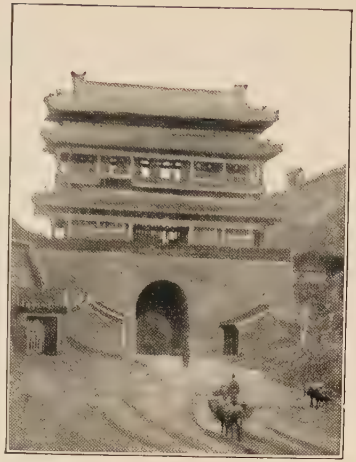
Yet we had of necessity a most anxious

time. Between Sundays 29th October and 5th November we lived through as many seeming weeks as actual days. Chinese letters from stations on the road came saying that all our Sianfu friends had lost their lives, and that our property there was burnt to ashes; and innumerable people were saying the same. And, worse than all, a letter came from Mr Shorrock expressing the fear that Mr and Mrs Donald Smith had been killed—worse because written in an English letter, and thus having much more weight. The seemingly strong evidence for that statement has already been referred to.

For ourselves, on several occasions we could only prepare for the worst. Nearly every one said that the soldiers would be the first to turn on us, and we were advised to escape. But we argued that if they turned on us, there was no escape anywhere; whereas if they were true, they were equal to protecting us. In any case we felt sure of the two who kept our gate. And so we passed the week from Sunday, 29th October, to 5th November.

Then things changed. At about 10 A.M. the post-office courier from the south, where some degree of authority was already established, entered the city carrying a white flag with the sign of the Revolutionaries written on it. By mid-day a proclamation was posted out

THE AUTHOR, IN MANDARIN DRESS.



CITY GATE.

"THE TWO WHO KEPT OUR GATE."
A Christian learner. An old opium patient.

To face p. 48.

stating the facts, bidding civilians to go on quietly with their own occupations, and containing a clause enforcing protection for missionaries, Christians, and Churches; and every one breathed more freely. The remaining fear was not of Revolutionaries, but of robbers who might take advantage of the time of general upheaval. Against them strong measures of protection commenced—the walls were lined with soldiers; a Citizens' and Merchants' Volunteer Corps was organised; and no stranger was admitted to the city. Two gates were shut and sealed, and the other two heavily guarded, as well as watched.

But after a day or two panic recommenced. The military mandarin wanted money for his soldiers—and readers should understand that an improperly-paid army has been one of the chief causes of the downfall of the Manchu dynasty—and the gentry refused it; and more fears of internal strife and riot were entertained. Then the military official thought it necessary to go to Sianfu, and he started on Saturday, 11th November. The people soon said he had run away. A few hours brought rumours that he had been robbed; and panic again ensued. And so ended a mixed week, which, however, contained a day or two in which some of the bolder people ventured to go to sleep.

CHAPTER II

FROM REBEL TO RULER

But Sunday, 12th November, brought another violent change. A man who is head of the "Society of Elder Brethren" for the whole ten counties was suddenly made prefect! By whose authority this was done no one knew; but no one dared to resist the appointment. The said person till then kept a small flour shop. He had been able to start and sustain the small business largely through the help of various members of my staff; and often had my cook wrangled with him about the quality and weight of the flour he delivered to our door. He could neither read nor write. He was, moreover, on the point of being expelled from the city nine days before, and was only permitted to remain because he had a wife and family, and also secured a satisfactory guarantor. This was indeed a catastrophic change from the sublime to the ridiculous, for our proper prefect was dignity incarnate. But

it was of other things than dignity that we thought, for the panic then became extreme; every one seemed utterly demoralised. We prepared a place at the back of our house for hiding, and erected a clothes-horse to serve as a ladder, when we heard that he and his roughs had gathered together at one of the schools with barbarous weapons. The slightest sound frightened everybody, and the military mandarin was away; but the night passed without an attack, and in the morning things looked better.

The appointment of the new prefect, amazing as it was, contained suggestions of reason. He was the one man who could prevent (or cause!) a big rising, and was perhaps the natural representative of one of the two parties mentioned in Part I. as striving for mastery in the new Government; for it seems that classes that usually have very different aims have combined for the overthrow of the Manchu dynasty. He kept order, and we had a few days of comparative quiet. He came to see me, and was as pleasant as could be desired—and I am not saying this just because he consistently addressed me as "Venerable Philosopher"! He guaranteed protection, and issued a proclamation to that effect. Pasted on our gate was a similar proclamation threatening drastic measures in

event of its breach, from the general in charge of the Revolutionary forces in Sianfu, the capital of the province.

But this period of quiet was not for long. In the course of a few days another man came forward demanding the office of the military mandarin, then absent. He had obviously no *right*, but *might* answered the purpose equally well; and so his demand was unresisted. But this man's ambition was insatiable, for in the next few days he claimed and secured no less than eight official seals (five civil and three military), and the people sneeringly referred to him as King of Yenanfu. Then the worst fears were again revived. For, while some of the leaders of these secret societies, if not men of moral principle, were at least amicable when there was no need to be otherwise, this fellow was nothing more or less than a violent, unscrupulous, and desperate robber. None of the others, though higher in rank, had any control over him. He talked most freely about killing and plundering if all his wishes were not carried out. By the use of threats of violence he extorted large sums of money from those who possessed any.

Eight weeks passed in this fashion (and they seemed as many years), and yet the anticipated forces of the new Government did not arrive. On twenty different occasions

REV. JAMES AND MRS. WATSON, OF SUITECHOW, WITH THEIR CHILD.

"PROTECT FOREIGNERS."

Reproduction of flag supplied by Revolutionary Government to all foreigners for display on residences and vehicles.

REV. AND MRS. E. F. BORST-SMITH.

To face p. 53.

they were rumoured as not far away. Often did I, with some persons of rank, go to the city gate to meet them; but every alarm proved false, and, instead, a new instalment of already numerous Elder Brothers arrived.

The foregoing will illustrate the difference between Sianfu and North Shensi — the former was, at least to some extent, in the charge of Revolutionaries; the latter in the hands of robbers: the former were men of some moral passion; the latter merely sought personal gain.

The difference cannot be better illustrated than by a concrete instance. Lieutenant Tsai, of Yenanfu, was a graduate of the military Academy of Tai Yuan Fu; he was, moreover, a member of the very society that led the Revolution in Sianfu, Wuchang, and Hankow. His qualifications as a soldier were far above the average. The fitness of the things seemed to require that he should be one of the representatives of the new Government. He naturally held this opinion himself, for he had sometimes expounded the meaning of the Revolutionary movement to me, and assured me of our own perfect safety, as a responsible person might. "I am here; trust me," he replied to my doubts.

But one day on returning to our house I was informed that Lieutenant Tsai wished to see me, and was even then in my study. I found

he had shut the door, which was rather unusual. On my entering he immediately made his request, lest by putting it at the end of a long conversation, in the usual Chinese way, his presence should become known. Might he be allowed to stay there quietly for two hours? That was his request, and precautions were immediately made against other visitors intruding. But when the conversation had continued for some time, he suggested turning the hours into *days*. In a word, the life of a Revolutionary proper was not safe. Totally different aims were sought and programme followed in North Shensi.

I hid him for upwards of three weeks—*i.e.*, from then up to the time of my own flight—and this was rendered somewhat easier by the fact that rumours were abroad that he had left Yenanfu, and had been robbed two days' journey away.[1] But had he been in the capital, he would doubtless have been hailed as a leader.

[1] A letter has just been received stating that on attempting to escape, some time after I left, he was captured and executed by the Elder Brother Society.

CHAPTER III

REVENUE OF THE REBEL RULERS

THE question arises: Why did not these robber chiefs order a general massacre? Nine out of ten of the ordinary people were certain they would. A record of what they actually did will account for what they left undone, for commission accounts for omission.

On the day following his transition from miller to mandarin, the new ruler took control of the prefectural bank, and, lest that act in itself should not be impressive enough, he imprisoned the manager!

There is the reason. He attained his end without a massacre. Why be a murderer, when you can be a mandarin? Why be a rebel, when you can be a ruler? Merely to receive is easier than to rob—to manage than to massacre.

This, then, was their mode of procedure. To enrich themselves was their aim, and to do it without killing, if possible. They

would not hesitate to do the latter, but it was not an end in itself. Give threats a chance, leaving deeds as a last resource. In a word, it was the highway robber's challenge—"Your money *or* your life"; failing which there was only one alternative—viz., "your life *with a view to* your money."

Well, they have got the bank as a first instalment—*first*, but far from final.

Ex-officials are not entirely without their use. The Prefect's *position* and *power* are theirs already. Next they take his *possessions*. No difficulty is presented; for since the prefect is a Manchu, all his anxiety is for his life, and the fullest advantage is taken of his fear. And it was not long before the man, who till then never went out without being carried by eight bearers and preceded and followed by several mounted attendants, was living in a workman's house on the charity of small shopkeepers who wished him well.

The military official had not started for the capital long before their gaze was directed towards his valuables; and in this case they had the audacity not only to take all there was, but to complain that there was not enough. That the captain's goods were not complete, I had the best reasons for knowing, for just before starting he had entrusted three boxes of his most valuable possessions to my

1. 2. 3.

1. "MISSIONARY AS MEDIATOR."
2. "MY FRIEND THE COUNTY MAGISTRATE"
3. HEAD MILITARY MANDARIN.

EVANGELIST DJUNG (WITH HIS FAMILY), WHO IS NOW IN CHARGE OF C.M.S. WORK IN YENANFU.

To face p. 56.

care. And it was my intention that while I stayed in Yenanfu those boxes should not change owners.

Some days later my friend the ex-county magistrate called and told me his experiences. Some of the rebel rulers, with their ruffian attendants, called at his house, and asked for £100, introducing their arguments in the form of naked swords. The magistrate pointed out that he did not possess so much. He had waited many years for an official appointment; this was his first, and he had not held it long. But his boxes were before them, containing all he had. After the interview he had only one suit of common clothes and a little road money; they appropriated all the rest. This was reported as a *contribution* of £11 to the Reformed Government; but no one was deceived.

Then began a systematic visitation of the parish — at least of those with possessions. The ex-miller would say: "Now I have lived in this city for thirty years, and know just how much you have; we shall expect £10 from you, or some other amount, varying in different cases. Excuses of poverty were met by the reply: "The rich can give silver, and the poor can give grain." The argument was worthy of a higher cause than that of personal enrichment. For instance,

what a good missionary advocate the man would have made!

It was said on all hands that they were going to appeal to me for a substantial sum. But this did not happen—probably because they knew that I was in great financial difficulties owing to the impossibility of sending silver from Sianfu. On the contrary, so anxious were they that I should stay in the city and thus display my own belief in their form of government, that they made a calculation of our probable complete monthly expenditure (including public expenses in connection with all the branches of our work) and offered to lend me enough for two months, on the condition of our remaining.

CHAPTER IV

STRIFE IN THE ELDER BROTHER SOCIETY

It is open to serious question whether the title "Elder Brother Society" would be so attractive to you after you heard it explained. For the emphasis is on the Elder; the *younger* brother does the drudgery, and incurs the danger, while the *Elder* Brother enjoys the bounty. But in the working out of their constitution that difficulty is not so grave as another—the relation of Elder and younger can be much more easily adjusted than that of Elder and Elder. There were many Elder Brethren, but there was only one prefectural office. And when all the offices, great and small, had been enumerated, the question arose: "What are they among so many?"

Who appointed or elected the miller to be a magistrate will probably remain a mystery; but it soon became patent that the vote was not a unanimous one. He had not taken up the reins of Government many days before other brethren, also Elder, and each at the

head of a mob of younger brethren, came forward and disputed his claim. And the arguing seemed to be that of the Irishman who contended that "One man's as good as another; and a great deal better." But it looked as though the strife might develop into more than one of words. It was to be feared that each Elder Brother would set his following of Younger Brethren on those of each other Elder Brother, and that a general scramble would take place, with "Every man for himself" (or his own Elder Brother), for their motto; and that the poor peace-loving citizens would be utterly fleeced. Happily that extreme limit was not reached. And it is gratifying to note that the opposition of one (only one, I fear) Elder Brother to the miller was on patriotic grounds. "This is not the time," he said, "for you to eat, drink, and dress well, and generally to enjoy yourself; but it is a time when you should seek to serve the people."

I heard through others of Elder Brother Yang's grand protest, and feared it was exaggerated. But I had the good fortune to meet Mr Yang a few days later, when he himself related the circumstances, and used the words which I have translated above. We were soon deprived, however, of his good influence, for he, with his followers, went back

to their own centre, over two days' journey distant. His presence in Yenanfu was not desired by his brethren!

But while the strife did not continue in the extremely acute form I have mentioned, it was never healed, and the miller-magistrate and the soldier-captain (named Hsie) were never at peace. The former advocated peace with plenty; the latter loved strife for its own sake, and advocated all kinds of excesses. The former said to me one day: "Some of our Elder Brethren are amicable men, but the disputes of the man named Hsie are hard to settle."

No one can fail to see that here was a very serious additional menace to the public peace, and the constant question in one's mind was: "Which will get the upper hand?" And here is, perhaps, the place to mention which actually did.

On 19th December (three days after I had left the city) a new mob of ruffians approached the city. The newly enlisted militia closed the city gates. The inhabitants, the militia, and the miller-magistrate were unanimously in favour of resisting them. But those without called out: "We wish to see our Elder Brother Hsie," who, in response, insisted on the gates being thrown open. The question in dispute was not small and unimportant,

but tremendous and vital; consequently the anger on both sides was extreme. Hsie insisted with such violence that the other party decided that the time for half measures was over; and the Chinese, when driven to extremes, know no mercy. They therefore bound and decapitated him on the spot, afterwards mutilating his body, and threw his limbs over the city wall to his associates, saying: "Here is your brother Hsie, whom you are so anxious to see." He took the sword, and perished by the sword.

CHAPTER V

MISSIONARY AS MEDIATOR

THE perils and dangers hinted at in the foregoing chapter brought a unique opportunity to the Christian missionary.

From the first outbreak of the panic until I left the city, two months later, circumstances daily — sometimes hourly — arose in which calamity seemed inevitable unless some one stepped into the breach. The ship seemed sure to be wrecked, because no one could take the helm. The duty was as difficult as it was dangerous, for who was there who could claim a disinterested motive? All were members of *sections*, none were impartial. There was a crying need for some one who had no personal ends to serve, no axe to grind; who believed in the unvarnished truth; and who had the best interests of the community at heart. And it was encouraging to note with what unanimity all classes of people instinctively looked in the direction of the

"foreign guest." And when it was thus apparent that in a time of deep distress the panic-stricken people regarded the man at the Mission House as a "friend in need," he (with reverence be it said) had "meat to eat that they knew not of"—an inner satisfaction and secret joy that made much of the peril seem worth while.

But instances are better than explanations, and so I will mention one or two. With the very commencement of confusion, when there was the utmost need for unity within the city, a sharp misunderstanding arose between the local gentry and the military official, which threatened to lead to a riot inside the city. Both sides spoke freely of resorting to arms. Just at the moment when there were "fears without," there was danger of "fightings within." The dispute was full of peril to every one. When a member of our staff came in with the news from the street, where it was the one subject of conversation, I said, with anger as well as sorrow: "Why does not some one intervene?" And then I detected his motive for hurrying to me with the news as soon as it reached him. Who was there to step in between? Every one who stood a chance of a hearing was either on one side or the other. There was not an impartial man amongst them; no middleman was avail-

able. Thus my own duty was clearly indicated. Happily my knowledge of some of the gentry was fairly intimate, and the military official was my close personal friend. I therefore spent the evening in interviews, though to venture at night into the dark streets was fraught with considerable danger, and the perils of a riot were averted.

I have already hinted that our ex-prefect was a Manchu, and was thus in daily terror of losing his life. But he was *popular*, for he had been kind and considerate in his dealings with the people. And his calamity called forth a display of sympathy and affection that were touching, and which incidentally illustrates (I know I must beware of by-path meadows, for they are many and tempting) the fact that that inert mass of conservatism which makes up seventy per cent. of China's population is influenced by considerations that are *personal* rather than *political*. It knows little and cares less about what Government there is in Pekin as long as peace and quietude, with the privilege of earning its sixpence per day, is afforded it. It certainly does not understand the difference between a republic and a limited monarchy; yet if you are kind (be you Chinese, Manchu, Mongolian, Mohammedan, Tibetan, or foreigner), it will appreciate you more or less. And so it was

one of the perversities of this movement for the destruction of the Manchus, that the greatest display of feeling I have ever seen in Yenanfu was deep concern for the life of a Manchu. (Now I am back on the main road again.)

And so petitions for his life were drawn up, and again it was thought that if the "foreign guest" would take part, they would be granted. I made it plain that I should be pleased to join in with enthusiasm, and I immediately invited some one versed in the technicalities of these matters to make a draft petition.

Thinking that I might not be able to see through all the little intricacies of the Chinese literary (wenli) style in which such letters are invariably written, he inserted (moved by highest motives, mind you!) a few things of his own. Happily for me, that assumption was not well founded. Now these additions were ingenious and interesting (and, unfortunately, typical) enough to be mentioned. He wrote (in this petition that was to be above my signature) that as a matter of fact, if you wanted to know the real truth, the prefect was not a Manchu at all; and so far from his name being En, as was popularly supposed, his real name was Bai. And, of course, I had known it all the time! Moreover, he was above the age limit for being

killed. When I remonstrated with this lawyer and said, "This is not what I told you to write," he laughed because I could read his writing and had seen through his trick. (He did not blush—we must wait a generation for that.) His reasons were as follows: You have a reputation for speaking the truth. It is a curious fad; but there it is, and, indeed, it has its uses. Therefore, since *you speak the truth*, you are the one man who can *tell lies* effectively. If *we* write this, they will know it is a lie. If *you* write it, they will think it is the truth. I hope it is needless to add that I adhered to my purpose of sending a petition, stating what I know of the character and conduct of H. E. En; but I changed my writer, after pointing out that his method would defeat its own end.

The petition was granted, and I think Mr En attributes that fact to the simple truth of one letter rather than to the ingenious falsehoods of others.

But we will leave the official circle for one that is a grade lower.

One morning before daybreak, and before I was up, my boy knocked loudly at my bedroom door, saying that Mr Bao, one of the local gentry, wanted to see me at once on a matter of the greatest urgency. I knew Mr Bao quite well. He had often been

before—in fact his little boy was in our small Mission School. But I had never seen him look as he did then. His face was livid with fear. I no sooner opened the door of my study, into which I had instructed the boy to invite him, than he prostrated himself on the floor at my feet. I had been living on surprises then for weeks, but I wondered what this particular phase might mean. I raised him, and invited him to a seat. But he would not sit down on any account. He insisted on standing in the attitude of a menial. "Would the pastor display great grace and save his life!"—that was his request. "Well, how is your life in danger?" I asked.

"The personal attendant of the military mandarin, who has gone to the city, is a friend of my partner's, and slept with him two nights ago in my house. Last night his mattress was found there by soldiers, and as neither he nor my partner can be found to-day, they intend to kill me before mid-day."

Well, the offence did not seem grave, and in any case Mr Bao did not commit it. I promised that although they might resent my interference in a matter that had obviously no connection with my profession, yet for pure humanity's sake I would certainly go and hear their version.

It was as follows: The goods of Captain

Ren (my military friend) are confiscate to the state (viz., to themselves, of course); these goods do not seem enough, therefore we must get them from those who had them in charge. Lieutenant Tsai has run away (the reader will know that he was hiding in my little shed, as I have already stated), and so Secretary King and Table-boy Pearl are responsible. The table-boy had a mattress, which must have been his master's (which it certainly was not), and, therefore (Chinese logic!), had *all* his master's possessions! Where he left the mattress (Mr Bao's shop) he has, of course, hidden all the rest. We would kill him if we could catch him, but as he has run away, we must kill the man in whose house the thing was hidden!

I expressed the opinion that my friend Captain Ren would return, and would be well able to look after his own property; they might therefore postpone anxiety about his things until they were held responsible; that Secretary King and Table-boy Pearl were faithful servants of the Captain; and that in any case Mr Bao had nothing whatever to do with the matter. And it is interesting to note that Mr Bao was alive and well many weeks later, after his principal accuser had been decapitated. Not that the day of reckoning for the rebel rulers had come—just that instalment.

Other instances might easily be added. During this time of wild confusion it became my regular task. I was consulted on every subject; was an *ex officio* member of every committee, and accompanied almost every embassy, access to the august presence of the ex-miller being regarded as much easier if I were present. Moreover, that particular service was not one-sided, for the Elder Brethren themselves were glad to avail themselves of it. They had not possessed themselves of position and power very long before they held a feast (everything is introduced with a feast in China) to inaugurate the new *régime*. Of course the "foreign guest" was invited, and the seat of honour reserved for him; and the reason for this was a simple one. It was thought that when the new authorities from the capital came they would regard the Mission House as the one and only place where an unvarnished account of all that had happened in the interregnum could be obtained. And they hoped that, should that occasion arise (which it never did), "good words" (an especially Chinese commodity) would be spoken on their behalf. Needless to say, I accepted the invitation, as I usually do to all such, for in China it is often necessary to sacrifice digestion to duty. And it was both duty and opportunity; for

although I prefer my little pulpit, I am bound to admit that it does not afford all the opportunities of good service supplied by the guest chair at the festal board, and I was able to use this occasion by pointing out the necessity of strict adherence to rules and the importance of seeking the good of the people rather than personal perquisites.

Perhaps without immodesty it may be said here that if the Christian missionary had not been held in such good repute among all classes, we should almost certainly have been massacred. For during this time of upheaval it often happened that, while the big armies were engaged in the constitutional struggle, smaller armies were busily occupied taking private revenge for old scores. Perhaps the long memory and the love of revenge are Chinese characteristics.

In any case, no one felt they had any revenge to take on us. But, on the contrary, as the storm grew wilder and wilder, all kinds and conditions of men—refugee officials, gentry, lawyers, clerks, merchants, and farmers—seemed to turn their gaze in one direction, and that the house of the foreign missionary.

CHAPTER VI

FLIGHT

On the evening of Thursday, 7th December, a youth wearing semi-foreign clothes, and without a queue, entered the city of Yenanfu, attracting much attention. He was one of the Taiyuanfu Christians, and was acting as the special messenger of the Rev. T. E. Lower of the Baptist Missionary Society there to all the Mission stations between Taiyuanfu and Sianfu, by the northern route. The letter he brought stated that the Rev. J. C. Keyte, M.A., had arrived in Taiyuanfu from Pekin, conveying the strong advice of H.B.M. Minister, Sir John Jordan, to all British subjects to leave for the coast without delay. It was accompanied by a further message from the Rev. James Watson, of Suitechow, saying that in harmony with the above advice, he hoped with his wife and family to reach Yenanfu on his way southward on Monday evening, 11th December.

Photo supplied] [*by Topical.*

SIR JOHN N. JORDAN, K.C.V., C M.G., K.C.M.G., ETC.
His British Majesty's Minister at Pekin.

To face p. 72.

THE AUTHOR, DRESSED FOR THE ROAD, WITH HIS FAITHFUL DOG JOSEPHINE.

ONE OF THE RESCUED.

The Author's daughter, who was only eight months old at the time of flight.

To face p. 73.

The letter further stated that Mr Keyte, and perhaps one or two others, might possibly come to render what assistance he, or they, could.

The question of starting for the coast was not an easy one to face. There was the little flock to think of. And although it was becoming quite clear that we could not stand alone much longer the abnormal nervous strain, it was harder to go than to stay, and emotion could be only imperfectly restrained as on the last Sunday morning we took farewell of them.

But our duty was clear. I could not stay on longer with wife and infant child in the face of such advice from the British Minister, and, moreover, temporary escape for the Christians, should that become advisable,—and there was no indication that Christians, as such, would be singled out for special persecution,—would be easier if we were not present.

It should also be added that not only were we without supplies of money from our provincial headquarters, and so heavily in debt, but our borrowed money was almost exhausted, and our creditors were sorely needing to be repaid in order to buy food for themselves. It should be needless to state that the utmost economy had been practised on our part, every one living on semi-starvation allowance.

Thus we could do no other than make for the capital, and take men to escort silver back to pay our creditors and keep our staff. Unspeakable additional comfort was afforded by the fact that Evangelist Djung, who with his family had moved to Yenanfu at my invitation, and Assistant Evangelist Chu, who for twenty years had lived there, would both be remaining. Both of these had rendered invaluable service in the starting and carrying on of the new work at Yenanfu.

But having settled the question as to duty, the *method* of moving had to be decided on. Intercourse between place and place had been suspended for two months. No one was daring enough to move from home. Some days were spent in the attempt to hire mules, but the lowest terms obtainable were these: for the first stage—*i.e.*, from Yenanfu to Sianfu—a price fully equal to the *value* of a mule was asked, and the money was to be paid on the spot before starting. The demand was beyond all reason, and, moreover, I had no ready money, as has been stated before, and so the question of hiring mules had to be dismissed.

Happily, however, we found a gang of carriers who also wanted to reach the capital, and were hoping for suitable work. Thus we were able to obtain sedan chairs (there are no cart roads in North Shensi), and also a

sufficient number of men to carry our necessary bedding and baggage, which we reduced to the irreducible minimum. And this accounts for the fact that even my camera had to be left behind—to the impoverishment of this volume. These men were willing, also, to receive the greater part of their fee at the other end of the journey—the only place where I could pay. Fortunately I had a pony, and could obtain the loan of another, to be returned to the owner's relatives in Sianfu. And so, by one day later than that aimed at, we were prepared to start.

Then another difficulty arose. The Watsons and Mr Comerford had not arrived according to their promise. I told the men we should have to wait a day, and this they did, but murmured considerably. But still they did not come, neither did Mr Keyte; but only a faint possibility of his coming had been suggested in any case. The mere cost of keeping the men was exorbitant; for, as they pointed out, they had to eat, and the prices of things had been multiplied; and this alone would in another few days have entirely exhausted the little money I had been able to borrow. But even if that difficulty had been superable, the next was not. They could wait no longer; they would go *either with or without us.* Which? It was for us to decide. With them would have gone what

was to all appearance our last possible opportunity of getting away. We therefore left letters for Mr Watson telling him of our dilemma, and promising to do the shortest possible stages, and to wait after a few if we could. And we asked him when he reached Yenanfu, if shortly after our starting, to get a special messenger to overtake us.

The reason for their delay has since transpired. Among the big cities in North Shensi, Suitechow had the unique distinction of not having fallen into the hands of the Elder Brethren. But just at the time when the Suitechow missionaries had intended to start, an attack by these violent rebels was made on the city.

Regarding this attack I cannot do better than quote from a special article written by a Pekin correspondent of the *Times*—a member, I suspect, of the Shensi Relief Expedition:—

"Large bands of Elder Brothers had attacked the city. They had built stone towers outside the walls, from which they had fired into the city, after which they had made attempt after attempt to scale the battlements. The inhabitants had bravely repulsed their assailants, pushing them down with long spears, and even pouring boiling water on them, until they finally drew back, whereupon

the south gate was flung open, and the city braves rushed out, killing many and capturing some thirty of the brigands, all of whom were executed. The leaders' heads were hung up at the gateway. The robbers then retired to the hills south and west of the city, where they awaited reinforcements."

This accounts for our waiting, and waiting in vain, for the Baptist Missionary staff of that city to reach us at Yenanfu. For ourselves, the question of escort had naturally been faced. Merely to secure soldiers might be worse than to go unguarded; for most of them were utterly unreliable, and they might rob and kill us. And so I applied to the Elder Brother Hsie, the usurper of the military office, for permission to *select* a number of reliable soldiers, for I knew some of them well. This he refused to grant, so I refused any military escort at all. But a militia corps had just been raised under the control of the local gentry, comprised entirely of youths *who belonged to the city*, which none of the soldiers did. These lads were largely apprentices and assistants who, through the Revolution, were out of work. In character most of them were eminently satisfactory; but in equipment, utterly useless. The gentry offered as escort four of these youths, and regarding them as much better than none,

I accepted them. Two had swords, and two had clubs, while I had a small Winchester rifle. And so we started.

The undertaking was full of risks. Our carriers were a motley crew, and it seemed more than likely that they might carry our things to a destination of their own; and it was not at all improbable that they might turn on us. Our escort would have been worthless had an attack been made upon us. But for the first two days our journey was without any startling event. The extreme cold and the shortness of the days made us thankful to do only small stages, and so at the end of the second day we had only covered forty miles. As we were preparing to start on the third morning we received one of the most complete surprises of our lives. Two letters were handed in. One was from the Rev. J. C. Keyte, saying that instead of coming alone, or with one or two others, as he had at first expected, his suggestion had resulted in the formation of a strongly armed Relief Expedition, under the care of Mr A. de C. Sowerby. This had naturally involved delay, but had rendered the Expedition effective. The second letter was from Mr Sowerby himself, expressing his regret at finding, when he reached Yenanfu, that we had already started, and advising

us to wait. These letters had been brought by a man who had travelled all night, and who had thus earned as much as he would usually get in two months.

Knowing that there was no possible accommodation for a large party where we were, we decided to go a little farther—*i.e.*, to the end of the normal stage—and there wait.

Later on in the day another surprise overtook us. We had been in bed some time, when there was a great noise and bustle in the inn yard, and our boy came rushing in, shouting: "Foreigners have come." On rushing into the yard, I found Mr Keyte and another member of the Expedition, Mr Palmer, of Harvard University, who had come to China just two months before. Not feeling sure of our safety, they had volunteered to leave the rest of the party and to ride in advance; thus they accomplished in one day (and part of a night) a distance that had taken us two and a half days. So excited did I become at the unusual sight of other foreigners, that for a long time I was unable to speak in English (I had had very little use for it of late), and could only make erratic remarks in Chinese, not understanding, until after reflection, why Mr Palmer did not grasp my meaning!

But this leads to another subject, and is somewhat anticipative of it.

PART III

THE SHENSI RELIEF EXPEDITION

SHENSI RELIEF EXPEDITION, KNOWN IN CHINA AS "SOWERBY'S LIGHT HORSE."
Mr. Sowerby is third from the left.

To face p. 83.

CHAPTER I

ORIGIN AND PURPOSE

When, amid all the wild and conflicting rumours that reached Pekin regarding Shensi, the fact was known beyond dispute, that not only had the vast Manchu population been practically exterminated, but that eight foreigners had been massacred in Sianfu, the Rev. J. C. Keyte, M.A., who had just returned from furlough in England, decided that at all costs, aided or unaided, accompanied or alone, he would penetrate to the far interior (over 1,000 miles by the route proposed), and help those in peril to escape. It was the sort of offer that would lead many people to ask: "To what purpose is this waste?" It was practically impossible that he could return. He was prepared to sacrifice his life, not with the certainty of rescuing his colleagues, but in the faint—very faint—hope of doing so.

> "Who would run, that moderately wise,
> A certain danger for a doubtful prize?"

asked our greatest poet. But there are other considerations than wisdom.

The cost to himself, even in the event of full success, could not be otherwise than great. At least I happen to know he was not obeying the instructions of his medical adviser! Perhaps I am not at liberty to say more.

After consulting first with Sir Alexander Hosie (Consul General of Tientsin), and then with Sir John Jordan (H.B.M.'s Minister), he obtained the sanction of the latter to go as far as Taiyuanfu, the railhead, and consult with foreign residents there. On arriving there he mooted his idea to Mr A. de C. Sowerby of the Smithsonian Museum, who had often led exploring expeditions into the heart of China. Mr Sowerby expressed the fear that the method suggested would not be effective; that it would *cost* life without *saving* life.

But only those are entitled to criticise who are prepared to help, so Mr Sowerby offered his own services for the mobilisation of a fully-equipped Relief Expedition. He had just completed extensive and expensive preparations for another exploring expedition, this time in Mongolia, when the Revolution broke out; and he readily placed his supplies of arms, ammunition, and stores at the disposal of the proposed party.

I am not at liberty to speak of all that was involved in that offer, but let this much be

"AFTER THE STORM" IN TAI YUAN FU.
Ruins of the foreign goods shops.

CHINESE TRAVEL : THE MULE LITTER.

remembered—there was a heroine as well as a hero, and no words are adequate to express the sacredness, as well as the bravery, of that offer. Moreover, little Sonny (of whom the father seemed to speak from morning to night) was less than a year old.

There, then, you have two men—a missionary and an explorer—the one initiating the movement, the other prepared to organise it; but the question arises: "Who follows in their train?" There is a sense in which, splendid as it was, you can understand the offer of these two; but will *others* run the risk? Seven others immediately volunteered; these were Messrs E. T. Nyström, E. R. Long, P. D. Evans, W. M. Palmer, H. J. Fairburn, J. H. Denver Jones, and F. W. Warrington. An eighth might be mentioned, for it was far harder for Mrs (Dr) Fairburn to stay behind than it would have been to go; and in a party which later contained so many ladies and children her professional knowledge would have been of the utmost value.

It would be attractive work to write their biographies, for they all well deserve to be known; and it would be difficult to get together nine men more distinguished. One or two of them might enjoy reflected glory if they chose, but these very men have great achievements of their own to their credit.

One, the son of a Swedish Senator, is already well known to lovers of adventure. Another, the relative of one of our leading statesmen, is an artist of a high order. And concerning him this also should be added: In order to save three hours—the time required to return to Paotingfu and obtain leave of absence—he ran the serious risk of losing his position, so urgent did he regard the need. Oxford, Cambridge, and Harvard, as well as Continental Universities, were all represented. It was—

"A noble army, men *and boys*";

for while none were old, one was positively young, being only seventeen years of age. But while he was behind others in years, he was second to none in grace or grit, culture or courage; and it was generally believed that, had need arisen, the date contained on his birth certificate would have been quite irrelevant.

While I cannot claim to be impartial on this subject, I imagine the coldest person could hardly read the names and accomplishments of the party without pride; but leaving other details about the *personnel* of the party to their biographers, I pass on to mention the *risks* they were prepared to face. For if men are judged by their motives, instead of by their

deeds, it is these risks that count, rather than the actual dangers passed through. What were they *prepared* to undergo?

People in Pekin were debating the question, and some were betting, as a matter of fact. Will they return? Some said "Perhaps"; most said "No." And that was not an exaggerated estimate, for, remember, eight foreigners had been killed and others injured in Shensi to their knowledge. The whole country was in wild confusion; and, heavily armed as they were, they were but nine. And one cannot refrain from asking again: "For what reason did they undertake these risks? What meant they by this service?"

A cruel and barbarous death seemed before them—what made them face it? "Scarcely for a righteous man will one die." But several of these men did not know us—we were nothing to them—our very names had not reached their ears. Surely there are very few who, recognising these things, will withhold their tribute of admiration!

CHAPTER II

FROM TAIYUANFU TO YENANFU

THE whole party gathered at Taiyuanfu on 2nd December, where an outfit of ten mules and nine ponies, together with bedding, stores, arms, and ammunition had been got together during the week. Here Mr Sowerby's personal popularity stood him and the party in good stead, and rendered the hiring of mules possible. To the muleteers the risks of losing their mules were great, and it was only Mr Sowerby's promise that, should the party perform the journey in safety, he would be personally responsible for their safe escort back to Taiyuanfu, that induced them to undertake the journey.

Final arrangements were made on 3rd December, and on the following day the expedition left Taiyuanfu, making first for Fenchowfu. Here they were hospitably entertained by the Rev. Mr Pye, of the American Board, who had stayed at his post.

ICE FLOES ON THE YELLOW RIVER.

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For the next few days there were no signs of unrest—in fact, the country was unusually (and therefore unhealthily) quiet. The party availed themselves of this opportunity for sport, and so tested both their weapons and their skill.

After leaving Fenchowfu considerable difficulty was experienced in crossing the narrow mountain passes in the neighbourhood of the Yellow River, and both men and animals repeatedly fell; but there was no serious mishap, and the Yellow River was reached and safely crossed on the fourth day from Fenchowfu, so that on 11th December they reached Suitechow, where Rev. and Mrs J. Watson and Rev. W. E. Comerford were stationed. Here there were undoubted signs of disturbance; and as the advance guard approached, the gates of the city were slammed in their faces.

Only three days before, as has already been stated, a mob of Elder Brethren had attacked the city, and it was generally supposed that, had they been successful, the missionary quarters would not have escaped their attention. Happily, however, the local militia and the Citizen Volunteer Corps not only gallantly defended the city, but drove the Elder Brethren back into their fastnesses, killing about thirty of them, and displaying the

heads of two of the leaders outside the west gates of the city.

No words can describe the wild joy, coupled with sheer amazement, on the part of the missionaries, as they welcomed the Relief Expedition. It was so utterly unexpected.

After a day to rest and refit, the cavalcade, now augmented by Mr and Mrs Watson, with their two children, and Mr Comerford, moved southwards towards Yenanfu. This part of the journey was full of danger for travellers, and had the Suitechow missionaries undertaken it alone, as was their original intention, they would almost certainly have been robbed of all they had, and probably murdered.

From this point southwards all had been captured by the Elder Brother Society. Bands of armed ruffians were constantly met, and their sentinels were often seen watching the road from the top of the Loess Hills.

One night, when Mr Palmer was guarding one of the mule litters, which was left somewhat in the rear owing to a breakdown, his little party was accosted by three armed men ; but on seeing Mr Palmer's revolver drawn ready for immediate use, they decamped—for the Chinese have an almost superstitious belief in the skill of a foreigner with his weapons.

On reaching Yenanfu, it was discovered that Mr and Mrs E. F. Borst-Smith, with their infant child, had already taken to the road, as absolute destitution had rendered their further residence in Yenanfu untenable. And when it was understood that their carriers were an unreliable rabble, a special messenger was at once sent and heavily bribed to overtake them, which he did on the following morning, some forty miles south of Yenanfu.

Moreover, Messrs Keyte and Palmer immediately volunteered to ride ahead in case of special danger, and they caught up the missionaries during the night of Monday (18th December), to the unspeakable joy and amazement of the latter.

Spare guns brought from Taiyuanfu were given to the men missionaries (Messrs Watson, Comerford, and Borst-Smith), thus increasing the available fighting force from nine to twelve.

This part of the country abounds in game—

"nine deer, two wolves, and scores of pheasants were shot from the roadside. Pheasants were so plentiful that the muleteers were often seen flicking them off the road with their whips. Ninety were once counted on a small patch of ground a stone's throw distant."—London *Times*, 8th March.

CHAPTER III

YENANFU TO SIANFU

Regarding this section, the leader of the Expedition, Mr Sowerby, wrote :—

"The party was now passing through what was perhaps the most dangerous county. Everywhere the Elder Brother Society was in possession of the country, and had done a considerable amount of pillaging. News continually came to hand that there was a large force just ahead. So much were these people feared that the official of Fu Chow (*see* map) asked permission to attach himself to the party for protection."

Those of us who knew North Shensi well were prepared for trouble at Lo Chwan, for there the forces of the Elder Brother Society were concentrated. We therefore could not claim to be quite free from uneasiness when we detected a large body of armed men coming towards us, and their lining up along the road with guns pointed was suspicious

enough. But it was their policy to be friendly, and the volley they fired was by way of salute.

On arriving at Chung Pu, the next stage, we found that the city had just been looted on the previous day by a company (600 strong) of the dreaded Elder Brethren, and the terrified inhabitants had all made their escape to the neighbouring mountains.

And this is the place to call attention to one of the many instances of almost miraculous escape. Had my wife and I not been overtaken by the Relief Expedition, and thus delayed, we should have reached Chung Pu on the very day on which this outbreak occurred, in which case there is hardly room to doubt we should have lost our lives. It should be recalled that it was at Chung Pu that Dr and Mrs Young, with their little son, two months earlier, found it necessary to abandon their mules and luggage, and to escape from the fury of the mob into the surrounding wilderness (*see* p. 40).

The formidable force just referred to was then moving southwards, and seemed to form a very serious barrier to our progress. The next two days were therefore full of anxiety for the leaders of the Relief Expedition; but during the following day a party of people were met, who said that the mob that looted

Chung Pu had left the main road and had occupied another position considerably west.

This was welcome news to the hunting members of the expedition, who availed themselves of the opportunity by indulging in a little deer-stalking; and they were very successful, for five deer were shot during the latter half of the day.

On nearing I Chün, however, a bugle was heard, and the advance guard was surprised to see the city walls rapidly manned by an angry and menacing crowd of ruffians pointing their muskets. Moreover, the town gate was quickly closed, and things assumed such a grave appearance that we could only conclude that we had been misinformed; as indeed was the case. It seemed that a rumour had preceded the caravan to the effect that 2,000 European soldiers were marching on Sianfu, and it had been decided to hold I Chün against them at all costs.

Then the mettle of the leader was tested, and an exhibition of the pluckiest nature was made. Those on the wall requested that one member should advance and negotiate with them, and Mr Sowerby, who never once showed fear in the face of danger, rode forward, right under the muzzles of the pointed rifles, and argued with them, assuring them that his errand was peaceful. Such

A MOUNTAIN PATH NEAR THE YELLOW RIVER.

A TYPICAL PATH OVER THE HILLS.

To face p. 95.

action might be fairly safe in European countries, but it was perilous indeed in China, where treachery is so frequent; and the action was worthy of the best traditions of our race. Fortunately the negotiations ended without mishap, and as a result the gates were thrown open, and the party was permitted to enter. But the bandits still looked none too friendly; in fact they were the dreaded robber band who had looted Chung Pu. They had heard the shots fired at the deer, and had concluded that an attack on themselves was meditated.

That night the little foreign party, surrounded as it was by this band of lawless robbers, kept a special watch; and it was with great relief that the Expedition moved on the next morning unmolested.

Toward the evening of the next day a danger was encountered that was totally unconnected with the Revolution.

As I was riding my horse at the head of my wife's chair I noticed that a rather ferocious looking bull was paying considerable attention to our dog Josephine, whose coat, though not red, is brown. In a moment or two, however, his eye caught sight of the curtain on top of the sedan chair, which, unhappily, had a bright red border. It was fortunate, indeed, that it was some distance away, for it rushed

wildly in the direction of the chair; but the heavy clubs which the bearers and attendants carried were sufficient to beat him off, and we again pursued our way in peace.

That night (it was 23rd December) it began to snow, and the prospects of continuing the journey on the following day did not seem great. Moreover, some of the members of the Relief Party—unaccustomed to the hardships of inland Chinese travel—were feeling fatigued, and so the advisability of a halt was seriously considered.

Next morning the snow was still falling fairly fast; thus the question was settled—call Christmas Eve Christmas, and treat it as such. And well it was that this arrangement was made, for it resulted in the discovery of unimagined latent genius in most of the members of the party. Not only were Messrs Nyström and Long, who were in charge of the commissariat, experts in that realm, but it transpired that almost every man was a potential cook, with the exception of those whose garments demanded that their gifts should take a sartorial turn.

Relaxation was the motto of the day, and right well was it carried out. And it was the determination of every one to make the day distinctive. The little babies had a bath—but that is a purely juvenile luxury! Those fastidious members of the parties who had

washed on other occasions during the tour found themselves in a dilemma, and finally had to resort to shaving to make the day in any sense red lettered. But happily these were few. For most it was sufficiently epoch-like to indulge in a wash. And at night introductions had to be made, so different did these look without their masks. But the liberties that some people take are limitless, and one man — but this was regarded as definite disloyalty, amounting almost to treason—was discovered with a clean handkerchief! But let us hastily turn away from such depravity.

The menu of the eleven course dinner was decidedly interesting. Among other delicacies were custard, venison, plum-pudding, mince-pies, and anchovies. Ladies can apply to the Commander-in-chief of the Commissariat for recipes.

Every one felt fresher for the feast, and on the following morning a good start was made. The next three days were more or less uneventful, although it should be mentioned that at Yao Chow the official sent a request to the missionary members of the party to ask "the foreign soldiers to refrain from 'playing in the streets' at night, for fear of disturbance"!

On the afternoon of 26th December the

party entered the gates of the east suburb of Sianfu, where the most cordial of welcomes awaited both rescuers and refugees. And it would be difficult to imagine any luxury that could surpass the steaming hot bath and spotlessly white bed sheets that met our gaze. We felt it would have been the basest ingratitude to sleep, and be unconscious of these joys. So we kept the lamp alight, so as to feed our eyes on, and consciously enjoy, the glorious sight.

GREAT BELL TOWER, SIANFU.

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CHAPTER IV

AT SIANFU—CONSULTATIONS

At Sianfu it was impossible to avoid delay. The mules from Suitechow and the bearers from Yenanfu had only been engaged so far. Thus conveyances had to be obtained, and under the best circumstances this takes time; but circumstances were not the best, and Messrs Nyström and Keyte spent a great deal of their time, night as well as day, in arranging this indispensable branch.

This necessary halt gave us the opportunity of studying the political outlook in Sianfu; of discussing the advisability, or otherwise, of proceeding to the coast; and of considering the ways and means of so doing.

Over two months had elapsed since the "Rising in Sianfu" described in chapter i., and we were anxious to study the character of the new Government. Those of us who had been isolated in North Shensi had perhaps been entertaining idealistic views of

the capital; we certainly felt fully convinced that there would be no chaos like that of North Shensi in Sianfu.

But the outlook was by no means as promising as we had imagined. Those in the new Government who were educated seemed young and inexperienced, and worse still, irresponsible and light-hearted. Well-meaning they may have been, but they appeared to have no serious sense of the solemnity or magnitude of the issues with which they were dealing. There was an air of flippancy about them.

But in any case, these were in a hopeless minority, being completely outnumbered by uneducated and uninformed men who were totally incapable of undertaking serious responsibility—in a word, by the Elder Brother Society. For to our surprise we found that, though in Sianfu they had not *sole* possession, they were so numerous as to seriously menace the power of the Revolutionaries proper. We found, too, that many of those of the better type who had been identified with the movement at the outset, had left it because they found themselves in a false position.

The Government therefore appeared to us as both undignified and unstable. Patriotic and able men there undoubtedly were, but

they were not able to control the forces they had let loose.

We then knew why we in North Shensi had waited, and waited in vain, for the army of the new Government. They had more work than they could overtake near at hand, and so the outlying districts had to be left to the mercy of robbers. Again and again did these self-constituted rulers ask us to speak "good words" for them in Pekin, and tell how well they had carried on the movement. But our observations did not confirm the good character they gave themselves.

It should, of course, be clearly understood that these remarks apply purely to Shensi—the only province of which I have any right to speak.

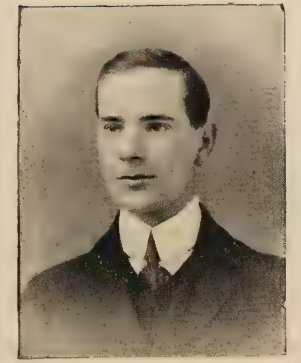
I mention the political outlook first, because it was in view of it that our other decisions had to be made.

One important thing to decide was—"Should we go to the coast or not?" which quickly resolved itself into the other question—"*Who* would go?" That some should go was, of course, taken for granted, and no more powerful proof of their duty could be found than the presence amongst us of nine men, risking their lives, and doing so at the sanction of H.B.M.'s Minister.

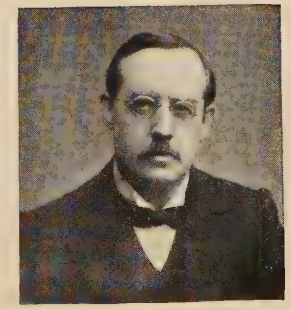
Residence in *North* Shensi, so far away

from even the semblance of government, was in any case out of the question; and much of the *other* work, whether north or south, was of necessity in abeyance. Moreover, the time of service and health of several made it imperative for them to leave for the coast at the earliest possible opportunity. They could serve every purpose better by having their furlough at once, and so be prepared to return when the condition of the country made it possible. Thus, by a process of elimination, the question was reduced to—"Should every one go, or should some at least stay?" In this connection the actual words of Sir John Jordan's message were referred to. They contained his advice to *all* British subjects to go to the coast; and his advice was specially urgent with regard to *ladies and children.*

The members of the Relief Expedition strongly seconded the British Minister's advice. But it was at once seen that there were very valid reasons urging the *doctors* to stay. They were face to face with a need and an opportunity that were altogether unique; there was the greatest possible appreciation, as well as demand, for their services. No better evidence of this appreciation could be found than the fact that the great city gates of Sianfu, which could not previously have been opened after



CECIL F. ROBERTSON, M.B., B.S., F.R.C.S.



REV. A. G. SHORROCK, B.A.

ANDREW YOUNG, L.R.C.P., L.R.C.S.

All of whom elected to remain in Sianfu.

To face p. 103.

dark even for the Viceroy, were opened at any time, day or night, for Dr Young. Fighting was going on east and west, and several branch hospitals within the city had been improvised. Thus Dr Young and Dr Robertson felt it impossible for them to leave. Mrs Young had an additional argument for staying —their little son, Russel, had whooping-cough, and the risks to his life of travelling at such a time were such as could not be taken. Dr and Mrs Charter, too, had decided to remain; but a strong appeal was made to them by those who were leaving for their presence and help, for the journey was full of risks to *health* as well as to life, and several tiny children were in the party. Besides, the party was to travel in the wake of the army, rendering it highly probable that a doctor's usefulness would be very great indeed. Thus Dr and Mrs Charter, whose furlough in any case was almost due, consented to accompany the Expedition.

The reasons that led Mr and Mrs Shorrock, with their eleven-year-old daughter, to remain with the doctors cannot be better stated than in Mr Shorrock's own words:—

"We think it advisable here that all except myself, Dr and Mrs Young, and Dr Robertson, should go at once to the coast. We can leave later if things do not improve. My wife is remaining with me, and Mrs Young cannot go

without danger to the life of her child, who is suffering from whooping-cough. The two doctors are as busy as they can be attending to the wounded soldiers, who are lying in an improvised hospital in the west (fifty miles away) and in the hospital here. It would be un-Christian, as well as most unwise, for the doctors to leave at this stage. Their help has been earnestly sought, and the appreciation shown by soldiers and leaders has been most unmistakable. If we desert the people here in their extremity, they are not likely to give us much consideration in the days to come. . . . Besides, there are some fifty missionaries and their children still in Kansuh, most of whom will come this way if they have to leave, and my wife and I can be of the greatest service to these, especially if they arrive in distress, as is not unlikely."

It is of the very utmost importance that misunderstanding should as far as possible be prevented, both regarding those who left and those who stayed. And I venture to believe that nearly every one present at those consultations would agree to the truth of the following: It was not justifiable for any foreigner (especially lady or child) to remain in Shensi *unless there was some special and adequate reason.* No adequate reason obtained in the case of any one else except Mr and Mrs Shorrock with their daughter, Dr and Mrs

Young and their child, and Dr Robertson; but their decision to stay can only be spoken of in terms of highest praise.

But let it be clearly known that admiration for the devotion of the Shensi Relief Expedition was unanimous; and both those who determined to remain and those who decided to go united with enthusiasm in passing the following resolution :—

"We, the members of the Shensi Conference of the English Baptist Mission, desire to place on record an expression of our high admiration for, and deep gratitude to, all the members of the Shensi Relief Expedition for the noble and heroic way in which they have been prepared to sacrifice, not only their positions, but also their lives, in the attempt to help us; and for the unfailing courtesy, as well as courage, displayed in all their dealings with us."

Of risks there was little to choose. It was certainly, at the time, far more dangerous to travel than to remain. But on the other hand, should we reach the coast, we should be safer.

Those who decided to go were: Rev. and Mrs Yensen; Rev. and Mrs Ahlstrand; Rev. and Mrs Bergström; and Misses Svenson, Mary Anderson, Verickson, and Lindvall—all *of the Scandinavian Alliance of the China Inland Mission;* also Misses Beckingsale, Watt, Thomas, and Turner; Dr and Mrs

Charter; Rev. and Mrs Donald Smith; Rev. and Mrs J. Watson; Rev. and Mrs Borst-Smith; and Revs. E. J. Ellison, J. Shields, W. E. Comerford, and H. H. Stanley—all *of the English Baptist Mission.*

Another question awaited decision: Which route should we take? There were several, nearer or farther, and no one at the outset was predisposed towards the one we ultimately took; for it is always dangerous, even in times of peace.

But as they were reviewed, one by one, we were driven to the conclusion that there was serious danger every way; and so there was no sufficient reason for avoiding the nearest. We therefore decided to take this route as far as Tung Kwan, and then reconsider the question.

So, having spent seven days (and almost nights) in hiring conveyances, the cavalcade moved out of Sianfu on Thursday, 4th January.

CHAPTER V

SIANFU TO SHANCHOW

THE procession that left on 4th January was a long one, being more than double the size of the one that entered Sianfu on Boxing Day; for the entire company now numbered 150 persons, including Chinese, with 93 animals. And in addition there were numerous other Chinese who regarded us as the safest escort they were likely to meet. Each conveyance had fastened to it a flag on which was written: "PROTECT FOREIGNERS." It was impossible to foresee in the least what was likely to happen, but on looking back over the week required for this section, there seems little that is marvellous to relate. It was filled with the mundane rather than the murderous; the dreary rather than the deadly; the trying rather than the terrible.

But who will say that these are easier? Peter said he would go to prison or to death, and he meant it; for surely no one could call

him a coward, far less a hypocrite. No; it was easier for him to be a martyr than a missionary; to face danger than drudgery. And the dreary drudgery and the mundane march fell liberally to the lot of the travellers during this stage.

And it is to the lasting credit of the nine members of the Relief Expedition that here they did not fail. An actual fight would have brought its own inspiration. But what of the straw bed on the ground; the shed, without windows or doors, where people in England wouldn't keep their horses; unappetising and unsuitable food, with the alternative of none; the night watch, with the temperature well below zero; the daily rising at 4 A.M.? There was nothing here to appeal to their heroism. But any account of the journey which left out these would be incomplete.

And this may not be an unsuitable place to impress upon readers the fact that there were, besides other children, three babies — nine, eight, and three months respectively. It was not quite a text-book thing to take them on this tour. For the journey in the daytime was hard on them, and the arriving at, and staying in, the inns was far worse. Every place had been looted; there were no windows or doors; the roof often permitted you to see the stars; accommodation was hopelessly inadequate; and it was bitterly cold.

And so this is a chapter of the everyday instead of the exciting. Nothing has marked itself on one's memory regarding this stage until we reached Tung Kwan—that strategic city at the mouth of the mountain pass. This city, though in Shensi, is also on the borders of Shansi and Honan, and is therefore immensely important. On reaching there on 7th January we found that it had been taken and lost, looted and relooted, three times. Imperialists and Revolutionaries had alternately been victorious and defeated; and they had left their marks both within and without.

We had the utmost difficulty in obtaining accommodation of any kind. Soldiers had monopolised everything. But after an hour or two of persevering pressure the military officer was persuaded to secure us lodgings for the night. For this he had reasons of his own, for the need of "good words" at Pekin seemed more and more urgent. We heard again and again from the leaders of the movement how well they had carried out the whole campaign; and it was interesting to infer their high estimate of the worth of a foreigner's words. With a view to making these more likely, a sumptuous feast was sent.

Here it was that we were to reconsider our route and to decide whether to proceed due

east through Honan, keeping just south of the Yellow River, or to first cross to the north of the river, and go through South Shensi. There was little to choose; both routes were full of danger, but there did not seem sufficient reason for taking other than the nearest. In fact to be just in the wake of the Revolutionary army might have its advantages *if that army remained victorious*, as seemed probable. And so we decided to keep to the direct road.

All along the way for the next three days were to be seen the devastating effects of the war which had been waged—with varying results to the conflicting armies, but uniformly disastrous to the population. All the common people had taken their portable possessions and escaped to the mountains; and their houses had been looted and burned by Revolutionary and Imperialist soldiers in turn. Cities and towns that some of us had known thickly populated and prosperous we found deserted and destroyed. How terrible is war!

On the afternoon of Wednesday, 10th January, we reached Shanchow, just a few days after the cessation of hostilities. These had resulted in the victory of the Shensi Revolutionary troops, and we began to think that the confidence in themselves, so evident

on the part of the officers we had met, was justified.

Shanchow is a city of great importance, both commercial and strategic, and their elation at its capture was not without sufficient cause. To use the words of Mr Sowerby: "It seemed as if the party was only following in the wake of a victorious Revolutionary army moving steadily eastward."

Here there was absolutely no inn accommodation, but the good-will of the military officers was again shown by their placing at our disposal large college premises, converted from their academic use into a barracks for the time being.

This building was vastly superior to any inn. Curtains and rugs soon transformed large halls into separate bedrooms; and no better evidence of the cosyness of the result can be given than the fact that the mothers were able to administer the ceremony of the bath to their babes, which was an impossible thing under the ordinary conditions of the journey. I believe, though I am averse to rash and unauthenticated statements, that certain members of the Expedition had a wash.

And so ended a week of the commonplace.

CHAPTER VI

SHANCHOW TO HONANFU; OR STOPPING THE BATTLE

THEN things changed. All the way from Sianfu we had been in the wake of the Revolutionary army, but now we were reaching the front. The actual fighting lines were not far ahead, and the problem of crossing them, never entirely out of our minds, became imminent. Thus, after consultation, the leaders of the Expedition decided that it would be well for two of their number to push on ahead and, if possible, negotiate a safe passage for the party through the fighting lines.

For this dangerous duty Messrs Sowerby and Nyström were selected, and in order to perform it, it was necessary to ride two days' journey in one. Thus as we of the main body moved slowly out of Shanchow on the morning of Thursday, 11th January, we were overtaken by these two galloping horsemen carrying the Union Jack. The

thirteen miles which occupied the morning for the main body were covered without any startling event.

But we had no sooner taken to the road again, after lunch at a wayside inn, than the noise of cannon was heard not far distant. We had only proceeded a little farther when a note was received from Messrs Sowerby and Nyström, saying that it would be quite impossible for us to stay for a night at the place we were making for, and that we must camp at Miao Kou, two miles nearer.

In accordance with this, we did our best to find quarters there. Miao Kou could not, by any stretch of imagination, be called convenient. There were but a few deserted and wrecked sheds. But after a time we contrived to find corners with roofs and three walls, though no fronts, for the ladies and children.

This had scarcely been done when the noise of galloping horses was again heard, and Messrs Sowerby and Nyström were seen rushing madly into the inn yard. They immediately ordered us *all* to crowd into one inn (we were in two) and to fortify it. But the reason for this can best be told in Mr Sowerby's own words:—

"Towards the end of our ride we were suddenly met by the Revolutionary army in

full retreat, with the shells of the enemy bursting in the air above them. The bulk of the Revolutionaries were in an absolute panic, and it was realised that this wild mob tearing along the road would seriously menace the safety of the large unwieldy caravan slowly approaching. There was nothing for us to do but turn our horses about and outstrip the flying rebels. The race was long and hard, but in the end we foreigners won," and arrived at Miao Kou just after the main body had succeeded in finding shelter. "Scarcely had the whole caravan got together in one inn, when the retreating rebels—sullen, savage, and hungry—began to flock past. Many had thrown away their arms, while all were in search of food and shelter."

But before they reached us the fortification of the inn was complete. The doors were barricaded with telegraph poles (such as had not been burnt for firewood were lying along the road); the ladies and children were all put under what shelter there was; the cartridge boxes were placed in the centre in charge of Mr Donald Smith, whose arms, broken on 23rd October, were sufficiently well to permit of his distributing the ammunition, while all the other men were on the defensive.

No one could foresee what would happen the next moment. An army in flight was the one danger we had regarded as hopeless.

The fact that they were armed would make their attack effective; whereas the fact that they were retreating might remove all restraint.

And we are all convinced that it was only these strong preparations that prevented an attack.

All night long a vigilant watch was kept, each of the men members taking turn.

We soon learned, however, that the main portion of the Revolutionary army had stopped its retreat, and had taken up a position at a famous robber village called Hsia Shih, a mile and a half east of Miao Kou.

The extreme danger being for the moment in abeyance, a return to diplomacy became advisable. For still the problem of crossing the lines, had to be faced. Mr Sowerby, this time accompanied by Mr Keyte therefore once more ventured eastward to interview, if possible, the generals of the opposing forces. Being night, the risks were many and great, for scouts and sentinels were posted at various parts, and one irresponsible act on the part of a careless soldier might have meant their death. The mile and a half was, however, covered in safety, and the two foreigners were received by Generals Chang, Fang, and the notorious Robber King, Wang.

These promised to do all in their power to facilitate the safe passage of our caravan,

including the suspension of hostilities until Messrs Sowerby and Keyte had ridden into the Imperialist camp to interview the generals of that side.

That night Robber King Wang shared his bed and supper of corn meal gruel with the two foreigners. Perhaps this gentleman's part in the Revolutionary movement should be explained at this point. The story was told us by General Chang, with a twinkle in his eye. (I'm sorry the twinkle was not photographed.) King Wang, who once held a respectable and important office in the Government, had for many years been a most serious thorn in the side of the authorities. The physical features of the surrounding country, of which he and his ruffians knew every inch, had contributed to making his position impregnable. No Governor of Honan had been able to conquer or catch him. Herein, then, lay General Chang's diplomatic triumph and the cause of the twinkle: "They tried to *entrap* him; I *enlisted* him." And surely no more effective ally could be found; for his fortresses and fastnesses were in situations where ten men might well worry a thousand.

Refreshed from a night's rest on King Wang's brick bed, Messrs Sowerby and Keyte, accompanied part of the way by Generals

Chang and Wang, commenced the ride over neutral ground. On the way they incidentally saw an illustration of the kind of code of honour that obtained. General Wang, seeing some men crossing the hillside, and *not knowing who they were*, commenced firing upon them. And this while hostilities were suspended! Otherwise the ride through was not as eventful as it might have been. Fortunately, when the two Europeans came suddenly upon the now advancing Imperialist army, they were at once recognised as foreigners and taken to Generals Chao and Chow. They were well received, and on explaining their mission, the following remarkable, and surely unique, terms were granted:—

On condition that our complete caravan passed Kwan Yin t'ang (a market town, ten miles east of where the main body of our party were staying) *by noon on the following day*, THE BATTLE WOULD BE POSTPONED till then!

In the course of these negotiations it was explained that the campaign was very pressing, and the battle about to begin would probably be decisive; yet in spite of that, so eager were they to ensure the safe passage of the foreigners, that this promise was made *and kept*. The story might be put alongside those of the Old Testament. It was as though the Red Sea divided to let us through, or

as if "the sun stood still," delaying the moment of battle until we were safely passed.

But let not the success of their errand permit us to forget its imminent peril to the two brave men who performed it.

From before daybreak on Saturday, 13th January, till mid-day our party was engaged in crossing the battlefield of the previous day. And during that whole day gruesome and awful were the sights seen. Often did we have to pick our way through naked and mutilated corpses, and our relief was unspeakable when shortly after dark we reached the city of Mientsi, hungry and tired.

But even then food for man or beast (and it will be remembered that there were 93 animals) seemed unobtainable, and it was several hours before some coarse rice was obtained from the army.

The next morning Mr Sowerby, this time accompanied by Mr P. D. Evans, undertook to ride two stages in order to wire to Sir John Jordan, the missionary societies, and the foreign papers about the safe arrival of their Expedition with those they had gone to rescue.

For the rest of us, the experiences of the last two stages were more or less uneventful. Food became more and more easily procurable in the towns passed.

But one incident showing the anxiety of the

HIS EXCELLENCY YUAN SHIH KAI, PRESIDENT OF THE CHINESE REPUBLIC.

To face p. 119.

authorities for our safety must not be omitted. Five miles west of the city of Honanfu, on the very spot where, several weeks earlier, a party of missionaries had been molested, and Mrs Blöm seriously injured, a large regiment of soldiers came to meet and greet the caravan.

From this point to the city the members of the Shensi Relief Expedition, together with the mounted missionaries, headed the long procession, while the regiment of soldiers just referred to brought up the rear. It was a most imposing sight. And it is not improbable that ill-disposed people thought that the day of reckoning had come.

The party had not been in Honanfu many hours before a special train moved into the station, chartered by the great Yuan Shih Kai, at the request of Sir John Jordan. Thus, for the first time for forty-five days on the part of the members of the Relief Expedition, and for many years in the case of most of the missionaries, the railway was again sighted.

CHAPTER VII

RECEPTION

A SPECIAL train was a luxury indeed, and it was a suitable transaction between the roughing of road travel and the rest and refreshment of residence in Pekin.

On Wednesday evening, 17th January, the train with both rescuers and rescuees (a thoroughly good though home-made word, which dictionaries would do well to copy) steamed into Pekin Station, where a large number of well-wishers had gathered to join in the welcome. And so ended the journey of over 2,000 miles, and conspicuous success crowned the efforts of the Shensi Relief Expedition.

In Pekin representatives of the missionary body vied with each other in their efforts to make the reception royal.

At mid-day on Thursday those who had been rescued invited their rescuers to tiffin at the Wagon Lits Hotel, and speeches expressive

of deep gratitude were made. But no words were spoken, nor could be, adequately to express the full feeling of those who owed their lives to the noble nine. It was decided that this gratitude should have a visible token—to take the form of a special medal, of which *only nine* were to be struck.

None were more hearty in their welcome, nor cordial in their congratulation, than was H.B.M.'s Minister, Sir John Jordan. He entertained the members of the Relief Expedition to dinner at his residence, and his views on the subject are best expressed in a letter which he, conjointly with the Swedish Minister, addressed to Mr Sowerby; and this I cannot do better than quote in full:—

"We beg that you will accept for yourself, and will convey individually to Messrs Nyström, Long, Evans, Warrington, Denver Jones, Fairburn, Keyte, and Palmer, our heartfelt thanks for the valuable services your party has rendered to the British and Swedish Governments by undertaking the relief of the missionaries in Shensi.

"We have kept our Governments as fully informed as possible of the progress of your expedition, and now that we have the pleasure of welcoming your safe return with the parties rescued from different parts of the province, we shall not fail to express to our Government,

as we desire to express to yourselves, our appreciation of the courage and devotion which has enabled you and your companions to carry your undertaking to a successful conclusion."

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